

Family Matters

In Prevention Of Child Abuse and Neglect

A Publication of the Idaho Children's Trust Fund/Prevent Child Abuse Idaho

WINTER 2008

Wow! This is Going to be a Great Event!



The Tenth Annual *Strengthening Families* Training Institute is being held for the first time! Huh? For the last nine years the Trust Fund has held a conference each spring. This year we're beginning a new tradition with some changes in format to respond to your interest in focusing on some topics more in depth and changing the name to reflect the changes. We're still going to have great workshops but we're also going to have some all day sessions and a full group community cafe conversation. We'll kick off on March 17th with Judy Langford, Senior Fellow at the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) who is one of the gurus of the *Strengthening Families* movement that is changing the way we look at child abuse and neglect prevention.

Langford is currently leading the national implementation of *Strengthening Families* through Early Care and Education, funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. Judy is the former Executive Director of the Family Resource Coalition and led the national family support movement in its early days as family support became an element of state policy reforms, community mobilization to support families, and a distinctive practice for front line workers of all kinds as they work in partnership with families. She was previously an award-winning contributing editor for *REDBOOK Magazine* and served as Honorary Chair of President Carter's

Advisory Committee for Women from 1977 to 1981. Everything is not nailed down yet but here are some of the highlights of what we do know:

- We will have an all day session on developing parent leadership with Robin Higa of the National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds. (See article below)
- We will be bringing in our colleagues from the Trust Fund in Washington State to share their work around postpartum depression and its impact on child neglect.
- We will also be putting a new twist on child sexual abuse prevention by showing how *Stewards of Children* has been implemented at the community level.
- We will have tracks on working with fathers where we will share work going on throughout the country and in our own backyard. Fathers are an important component of our work to strengthen families.
- We want to explore the whole area of kin care since grandparents and other relative caregivers are a growing part of who is raising children in Idaho. Legislation being proposed this next session may make it more likely that foster care placements will be with relatives.

There is much more to come as we plan the full conference, so stay tuned, mark your calendar for March 17th and 18th and look for registration materials in the mail after the first of the year.

Changing the Lives of Children: One Conversation at a Time

"I ask you to imagine that we do have the power to make a difference through fostering conversation, community, and committed action in our lives and work. I deeply believe that when we help to change the collective conversation about a situation, we have the opportunity to influence the future of that situation, whatever it may be and at whatever level of scale it occurs."

—From Juanita Brown, author and developer
of the World Café process

Robin Higa of the National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds, took this idea from the World Café and adapted it to the world of parent leadership through the creation of what she calls Community Cafés. Robin has been developing this process through work she is doing in Thurston County, Washington (Olympia) and with groups throughout the country.

On Saturday, November 22nd, the Idaho Children's Trust Fund in collaboration with FRIENDS National Resource Center and the National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds, were able to offer a free one-day training in Community Café's presented by Robin Higa.

Higa and co-facilitator, Steve Byers, treated the 25 participants, who

traveled from as far away as Twin Falls, Pocatello, Buhl and Burley to an approach that sparks leadership and builds partnerships to strengthen families. The Community Café Host Orientation provided the opportunity to experience a Café first hand. It also helped to increase knowledge about the protective factors necessary for children to thrive and how to build them with families. The training emphasized the importance of parent leadership and real partnerships between parents and programs.

Intentional conversation was the topic and the method for the day's interactive presentation for parent and program representatives from early childhood centers, schools, faith-based organizations, service programs, local business, neighborhood centers and social service systems. Seeds of conversation were planted and harvested in both small and large group discussions with a variety of documentation strategies. Participants learned how to successfully plan and implement community café's, conversation design, monitoring and evaluation and left prepared to host cafés themselves with an 83 page Host Orientation Toolkit in hand and the experiences of the day in heart.

If you missed the opportunity to join Robin in this Café experience, she will be training in the technique and presenting a Parent Café' at ICTF's *Strengthening Families* Training Institute 2009 in Boise March 17 and 18.

New Grants Manager on the Job

The Idaho Children's Trust Fund has a new grants manager.

Wickes MacColl, who has had an extensive career working with or for children as a private and public school teacher, mentor, program developer, and for the past 5 years as the director of the Episcopal Diocese of Idaho's camp at Paradise Point, began in early December. MacColl replaces Margaret Hower who left in July to pursue a Masters in Social



Work degree at Washington University in St Louis after 4-1/2 years with ICTF.

"We are excited to have her," said Mary Marshall, Jerome, who sits on the Trust Fund's Board of Directors and was a member of the interview team that hired Wickes. "She brings a wealth of experience to the job. I know we were all impressed with the courage she displayed while working in tough inner city schools in Baltimore. She can help bring a new perspective to our work in Idaho."

Pinwheels Statewide

For the first time, the Idaho Children's Trust Fund will be coordinating statewide activities during Child Abuse Prevention Month in April.

Roughly 20,000 babies are born in Idaho each year and the network of organizations with which the Trust Fund works, provides family strengthening services to help ensure that all children get the nurture and support they need to grow up healthy and happy. This spring groups throughout the state will be "planting" pinwheel gardens to represent each child born in the state and our commitment to their healthy development, free from abuse and neglect.

Please let us know if you'd like to be part of an effort in your county to increase awareness of child abuse and neglect prevention and we can help you make contacts.

Dear Mr. President ...

Organizations that the Trust Fund works with on the national level are drafting letters to send to President Elect to ask that he and the First Lady prioritize the needs of young children and the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

Through our membership in the National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds, which is made up of 52 Trust Funds in all the states plus Washington, DC and Puerto Rico, we are also members of the National Child Abuse Coalition. The Coalition recently sent a letter to the team working on presidential appointments and policies, proposing, among other things, the following:

- *Develop a national strategy to prevent child maltreatment so that children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.*
- *We applaud the commitment of President-elect Obama to promote the prevention of child maltreatment, to support parents with young children, and to expand Early Head Start.*
- *Allocate increased resources to support community-based child abuse prevention activities through the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA).*

- *Provide states with funds adequate to the improvement of child protective services through the CAPTA Basic State Grants.*
- *Support parents with young children through home visitation programs with funds available to promote an array of research- and evidence-based home visitation models that enable communities to provide the most appropriate services suited to the families needing them.*
- *Expand the number of eligible children for Early Head Start.*
- *Charge the Surgeon General with the development of an initiative to promote a public health approach to the prevention of child maltreatment, and to issue a comprehensive report to the American people on the nature and extent of child abuse in America, its causes, prevention and treatment.*

These proposals if implemented and funded would greatly enhance the efforts of Idahoans working to strengthen families and reduce the incidence of child abuse and neglect. These are significant investments in the future of our children and the society as a whole. Let us know if you'd like to work towards the passage of any of these initiatives.

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What's the PIP and What's it Got to Do with Prevention?

Every five years Idaho's Child Welfare program undergoes a federal review to determine how well it is doing in meeting a series of bench-marks related to child well-being. The program recently finished its Children and Family Services Review and is now engaged in developing the PIP or Program Improvement Plan.

If we see ourselves as part of a continuum of services for children that begins with strengthening families and their ability to raise healthy and happy children and continues through various family interventions, removal of children from their homes, foster care and adoption, **the whole system hopes that we can be successful at the front end.**

The PIP looks to making those changes and we can help. ICTF grantees and other partners are already doing some pieces of the PIP including:

- Building collaborative relationships within the communities;
- Increasing the engagement of fathers in parenting;
- Engaging extended families, child care workers and others in safety plans that aid prevention work;
- Promoting relative placements as first options wherever it is viable and safe;
- Addressing the over representation of native children in the foster care system.

The PIP may provide an opportunity for ICTF and our partners to collaborate with the Department of Health and Welfare to remake a system that is often condemned as too punitive and help it focus where we'd all like to see it: on prevention of child abuse and neglect before it ever occurs.

Nominate a Program that's Making a Difference in Kids' Lives

Each year the Children's Trust Fund's Board of Directors has the honor of choosing an exemplary child abuse and neglect prevention program in Idaho to receive a \$5,000 cash award. We are looking for nominations now and the deadline is February 15th. Last year the award was made to Help, Inc. in Idaho Falls for its work in creating and implementing the innovative El Valor de los Padres program.

Who do you know who is making a difference in the lives of children in your community and deserves recognition?

The application and criteria is on our website at:
www.idahochildrenstrustfund.idaho.gov.

Taking the Show on the Road

Idaho's *Strengthening Families* program, a collaboration between the Trust Fund and the Idaho Association for the Education of Young Children (Idaho AEYC), continues to grow locally and gain recognition on the national level.

Strengthening Families training is available in every region of the state, and this year 250 providers have attended 125 trainings throughout Idaho. Here is what one family provider has to say about the training:

I am so grateful for this class and our new experiences that not only have benefited our daycare families, but our lives as well. I would strongly suggest this series to everyone no matter how long you've worked with children or how skeptical you may be-- this series will definitely forever change you life and the lives of the children in your community.

In addition to positively impacting families in Idaho, our *Strengthening Families* work is gaining national recognition. Recently, Idaho was chosen as one of just three *peer states* selected to guide the rest of the nation in embedding *Strengthening Families* into Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS). *Strengthening Families* has been included as a quality standard in Idaho's QRIS from the very beginning.

In its role as a peer state, Idaho is participating in national discussions around program evaluation as we work to establish *Strengthening Families* as an evidence-based practice with concrete, measurable ties to child abuse and neglect prevention.

Idaho's *Strengthening Families* curriculum is also gaining national attention. In November, Idaho AEYC staff traveled to New Jersey to train 55 CCR&R trainers in the 17-hour curriculum. The

training was well-received and has been recommended to the national network of states participating in *Strengthening Families*. Here is a comment from New Jersey:

[Trainers] are going nuts over the kits!! They simply love the comprehensiveness as well as the ease of using them. They are now a critical part of the SF effort here in NJ. One of our trainers suggested that the Idaho kit be a "gold standard" states try to achieve in order to really implement this work effectively.

Strengthening Families through Early Care and Education continues to attract the attention of foundations, policy makers, and national leaders, and we are proud to say that Idaho is well poised to continue its role as a leader in the field of child abuse and neglect prevention.





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The Idaho Children's Trust Fund's 10th Annual *Strengthening Families* to Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect Training Institute will be held this year at the Doubletree Riverside in Boise **March 17 & 18, 2009**. Mark your calendar and keep track of developments on our website at:



SAVE THE DATE

We Need Your Help Now More Than Ever
Tough Economy is Tough on Families

A downturn in the economy equals an increase in child abuse and neglect, reports The (Riverside California) Press-Enterprise. Childhelp, a national non-profit organization focused on child abuse, notes nationwide calls to their organization are up 8 to 10 percent in just the past three or four months. John Reid, executive director of Childhelp, "When you get in tough economic times, parents get stressed and unfortunately they take it out on their children."

The Idaho Children's Trust Fund helps families deal with the stresses that can lead to child abuse and neglect.

Remember the Idaho Children's Trust Fund with a check today to PO Box 2015, Boise, ID 83701 and remember to *Check Child Abuse* by designating the Idaho Children's Trust Fund on your Idaho State Income Tax form. We are putting your money to work to prevent child abuse and neglect.